

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
July 27, 2011

Lt. Governor Phil Scott works at GE Aviation

Montpelier, VT - Yesterday, Lt. Governor Phil Scott continued his "Vermont Everyday Jobs" tour at the GE Aviation plant in Rutland, where he gained hands-on experience with a mix of classic and cutting-edge technology, as well as a startling appreciation of the energy needs of Vermont's manufacturers.

Lt. Governor Scott started the day in a parts production cell for the CF34-10 engine, used in regional passenger jets. Under the direction of cell team member Bruce Towle, he encapsulated an airfoil in a metallic matrix, then machined it and finished it into a high precision component used in the aircraft engine's compressor.

Scott's industrial background came in handy at the machining bench, where Towle said the Lt. Governor looked right at home. But Scott was awed by the fact that "the tolerance for error is literally the width of a human hair. Guys like Bruce make the job look easy, but there are a lot of steps to the process."

The Lt. Governor then moved on to the plant's newest production line, which supplies titanium aluminide turbine airfoils for the GENx commercial aircraft engine, which will power the next-generation widebody aircraft like the Boeing 787 and 747-8. This process showcased state-of-the-art manufacturing technology and highlighted an area where the Vermont plant has developed a formidable edge in the aviation marketplace. By substituting a fully automated electrochemical machining process for conventional machining, GE has reduced production time of this step in the process by 90%. The lightweight parts also reduce the aircraft engine weight considerably - enough, in fact, to permit four more passengers to travel on the jet. With fuel costs rocketing skyward and the commercial airline industry searching for every available efficiency, this technology is in high demand.

Scott was also amazed at the electricity demand of the plant, which runs 3 shifts a day, 7 days a week. While the plant has many energy reduction efforts underway, it still requires a lot of power on a daily basis. As plant manager Dan DiBattista explained, "We need electricity that's not only affordable, but also reliable, in order to keep these lines running. If we have so much as a brownout, we have the potential to scrap a significant number of our in-process parts."

"I saw the electrical meter on the GENx line jump up to 17,000 amps at one point," Scott said. "A residential home can barely use 100 amps if every single appliance is running. That really struck me. Too often, we think about electricity in the residential context, but production lines like these are what drive our state's economy. Right now, GE is expanding and hiring, investing in new equipment and training programs that keep more young people in Vermont. All of those benefits can be traced directly back to the state's energy policy."

About Lt. Gov. Phil Scott's "Vermont Everyday Jobs" Initiative

Lt. Governor Phil Scott started his "Vermont Everyday Jobs" initiative to promote Vermont businesses and highlight the hard work that Vermonters do every day in all areas of our economy. By finding out firsthand, and in a hands-on manner, what it takes to make Vermont businesses work, the Lt. Governor will gain a better understanding of what

state government can do to help those businesses work better. The tour will also help to facilitate relationships and ongoing dialogue between Vermont business leaders and their representatives in state government.

In previous "Vermont Everyday Jobs," Lt. Governor Scott has worked with the Orange County Sheriff's Department, the Lake Champlain Ferry, Breakwater Cafe, the Windjammer/Best Western Inn in South Burlington, St. Albans beekeeper Michael Palmer, violin-maker Doug Cox in Brattleboro, taught second grade at Union Memorial School in Colchester, built a solar tracker at AllEarth Renewables, checked lift tickets at Stowe Mountain Resort, worked in the Emergency Department at Porter Hospital, worked with a Green Mountain Power line team, and changed oil at Vermont Quicklube.

###

For more information, please contact:

Nancy Driscoll
Chief of Staff, Lt. Governor Phil Scott
nancy.driscoll@state.vt.us
Office: 802-828-2226
Cell: 802-734-7555